

GNOSIS MADE WORD

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PROLOGUE: GNOSIS MADE WORD

Conceived immaculate, I nonetheless
Wished for a thing exclusive to myself,
And so I exercised effective will,
With freedom to elect as I desired.
Engend'ring Self, therefore, I hatched a god
Out of the womb of all that made me "me."

But who I willed was not immaculate:
He marred the vision I had once enjoyed
While contemplating all reality.
He gazed at his reflection on The Deep,
And when he saw it, thought that it was good,
And said, "I AM. There is no god but me."

I heard the idol's bombast. In this way
I knew what kind of thing the upstart was,
So turned again in sorrow to my Source,
And caught a spark which turned to living flame
Fed by the fuel of Love. That fire took shape,
And all religion tries to emulate

Appeared. No seeing eye could ever then resist
The Light transcending every faculty
By which these words are imaged on true hearts:
"The One is one (there is no other One) –
Unsigned in any mortal register,
And self-subsistent, without any peer.

Thus none can speak of One except this Word
Proceeding from the Gnosis – I am He."
On meeting Matter's realm this testament
Fell to The Deep as incandescent drops
Into that space and time where nature's laws
Are fetters from which none can be exempt.

Yet what descended still remains unquenched
Although bemired within this tomb of clay:
Knowing the beginning and the end,
From whence it came, and whither it must go.
A distant beacon for that Light, I send
What light I have, what wisdom I dare show.

THE GNOSIS

The bringing-into-being of the material universe has been a process of centrifugal departure from the ultimate reality to levels where consciousness is increasingly attenuated. There is, nevertheless, a definite gulf between the realm of consciousness and that of inert, unconscious matter, which is not the result of any providential "creation". When a conscious (or "proprioceptive") element is introduced into matter a futile dialectic is initiated between will and matter, which is sinister to the extent that it subverts pure consciousness's contemplation of itself.

Consciousness, although ultimately its higher source, is not proprioception. Proprioception is a process, developed by the evolutionary process, with an end in mind: to sustain a material subject by monitoring its surroundings and making changes compatible with the survival of its own perceived integrity. Its motive force is will. The will's subject dreams of its successful domination of its environment. "God" is self-interest in its most successful form imaginable – "success" being defined by longevity and domination. He is immortal and omnipotent, and promises power and eternal life to his worshippers. He is essentially the will to power.

In the human sphere, intuition of pure "divine" consciousness may reside in the mind of man, but is always co-mingled and confused with, and corrupted by, "intelligence." Intuition is an awareness which, as an aspect of consciousness, is an end in itself; intelligence is a proprioceptive mental faculty which, although divine in origin, is usually directed towards matter and subject to the direction of carnal will. If intelligence is to be directed or re-directed towards true consciousness, there must first be a true perception. This perception is possessed solely by the spiritual man. Intimation of the spiritual realm is innate in those who share the spiritual nature.

The bringing-forth of order within the realm of matter is approved of by intuition. It is this approval which enables repentance to come about. When the impulse towards order-in-matter re-directs itself towards true consciousness (the Fullness, or "Pleroma") then order can be re-oriented to the transcendence of matter. But while the impulse to order is genuinely divine, the impulse to worship order as an end in itself is not. It is rather a form of idolatry prevalent throughout religion. Because intuition cannot be denied or negated even as idolatry is being practised, the true end of intelligence is perceived deep within the heart. Because it cannot be denied, it expresses itself in human aesthetic activity. It is as a result of this process that beauty may be found within the material world.

History is essentially will seeking to express itself through matter in time; repentance and re-ascent must take the form of a rejection of these carnal elements – although asceticism can simply be another manifestation of the will to power. Meanwhile, the pneumatic, imprisoned in matter, are not an "elect". In "election", a God personally chooses who is to be saved on the basis of criteria which are inaccessible to both the elect and to the damned. If that God is supposedly the fount of all justice then this is a flagrant and self-contradictory abuse of his status, and the outrage felt by the creature makes him morally superior to his Creator. The wrong is only compounded by ascribing blame to an ancestor (Adam in the Judaeo-Christian tradition) who was an individual, morally free agent independent of his descendants. In fact, there is no chosen "elect". "The Spiritual" are what they have been and always will be without beginning and without end. Their essential nature is not some-thing created from no-thing, but rather an emanation from The Ultimate, which they must re-appropriate by anamnesis. Their physical prison has enclosed them by a primordial accident.

The gulf between The Carnal, the creations of the demiurge, and The Spiritual, emanations from The Ultimate One, is explicable. The existence of a middle order of humankind

which aspires to so much in organised religion in all its various manifestations, and yet so consistently contradicts its declared ideals, is not so easy to explain. In mythological terms: the demiurge believed himself to be supreme. In order to enlighten him (and to simultaneously chastise him) the Pleroma had to reveal the spiritual to the material, thereby causing some of the former to be ensnared and temporarily abandoned by the return of the immaculate to the Fullness. This was how "The Spiritual" came to be in the world. But the action of a being of spirit, in its desire to enlighten, created something hybrid, both carnal and spiritual, a reflection of mind, just as the demiurge was a reflection of desire. "The Spiritual" and "The Psychic" therefore emanate from the same source, but are of a different order.

Because revelation of The Spiritual was a moral act, The Psychic have a moral element which raises them above mere Desire. They are at their best when the moral element is combined with Ialdabaoth's impulse to order and shape; we see them exemplified in reforming saints: holy men and women and other "spiritual" leaders. They are, nevertheless, not of the same order as The Spiritual, who are a seed which grows secretly.

The Spiritual can not be identified by any physical, mental or moral characteristics. They cannot therefore form any identifiable group in human society. Even faith, whether or not it is expressed in a publicly observable ritual, can not admit them to "The Company of The Spiritual" in a sense comparable to "The Company of The Faithful" in Christian orthodoxy. The Spiritual are perhaps from time to time able to recognise the traits which they have identified in themselves, but this is no guarantee that what they have perceived is a decisive indication: the more authentic the trait, the less perceptible it is to the senses. Our senses and perceptions are in any case susceptible to deception by ourselves and others; and, furthermore, The Psychic will share some of the spiritual characteristics of The Spiritual.

Even if The Spiritual were able to form themselves into some kind of caucus, they could lay no claim upon the service of others – nor, indeed, is there anything they would desire from them in this world. "Church" is therefore not possible. Because the material world is irredeemable, there is no point in forming an organisation which promotes the cause of faith in redemption. And because God does not act in the world as Saviour, there can be no scripture, no ritual sacrifice, and no priesthood. There is no providence, no prayer, and no "God". The only sacrifice is that of The Spiritual, who suffer in their own flesh the consequences of their knowledge of the designs of the Powers and therefore the hostility of The Powers towards them. Even Gnostics, if they organise themselves into a "Church", will fall prey to those corruptions which are the inevitable result of admitting people who see entry either as a means of improving their material situation, or as a way of seeking to extend material "blessings" into eternity, or as a way of seeking sanction for, or endorsement of, their own superiority, priority or specialness. These are the ports of entry for the doctrinal vices of an organised Church. The corruption of Truth is manifold: the development of a sacrificial theology and cultus; schemes involving the purchase of spiritual merit; sponsorship of religion in order to promote social stability, or by disaffected and disenfranchised groups, or by social groups based on race, class or sexuality; situations where association, or where aesthetic pleasure or expressions of cultural identity are paramount; families or other groups seeking self-aggrandisement by the material support of shrines; authors seeking personal aggrandisement or profit by publishing projects; issues of control over endowed assets; the confusion of religion with magic; and the influence over the definition of Truth by endowed remuneration – all are manifestations of this corruption.

Because everyone feels the need to regard themselves as special, the idea of providence creeps in. The Spiritual, it is believed, are chosen from among the rest as part of God's grand design. This elect have not been trapped in the world

as a result of accident or folly: they have been placed there for a purpose. In short, they are God's chosen instrument in the salvation of the world. But there is no providence. The Spiritual are trapped and are returning through the aeons by paths of liberation which are difficult and known only to themselves, even if liberation is assured. Perhaps the doctrine of providence is the authentic expression of the truth about the psychic (as distinct from the spiritual) order. The revelation of the spiritual order was indeed an act of will on the part of a being higher than the one called "God". The act of volition brought into being those called "Psychic" for the benefit of The Carnal, but since The Carnal are not equipped for enlightenment the sacrifice of The Psychic on the altar of matter is in vain.

Morality is the preserve of The Psychic. (For The Carnal, morality is only a fear of an external and punishing authority which keeps their lusts in check.) When the Pleroma wished to reveal the realm of the Spirit to the Demiurge, it brought into being a higher sentiment. The Carnal seek to bring order into matter, and Ialdabaoth is a principle of order, but this is simply an expression of the will to power. It is only when this purely carnal order-in-matter is measured over against the non-material realm that morality is born. If there is a simple knowledge that there is a spiritual realm present, and there is an impulse towards it, then the material realm will be measured over against the spiritual realm by those who experience the impulse. This breeds a profound dissatisfaction with things as they are in the material sphere. It is this dissatisfaction which engenders morality and is codified by The Psychic into Law. The Psychic then extend its provisions to The Carnal by promoting sanctions, real or imagined.

"Conscience" is the active manifestation in moral decision-making of the innate spiritual nature of some human beings. The spiritual nature of some human beings is identical with, and participates in, the nature of a Spirit which transcends the material universe; conscience is therefore attuned to moral principles which transcend behaviour necessary to

material well-being. It is the voice of an "alter ego" emanating from a differently-constituted identity. As the voice of our spiritual nature, it may conflict with the demands of our carnal nature. It is seen to be capable of passing judgment on all notions of deity and all theories of the relationship between a creator and the created order. Since systems are subject to the same judgment as deities, a systematic theology, or an appeal to a historical tradition or divinely-sanctioned authority is out of the question. Any such attempt will make a poor imitation of Truth.

Our aim is not to establish systems. Our aim is to call forth those who share The Knowledge. This summoning of an invisible community of insight, this "thing called forth" (*ecclesia*), is the nearest we dare approach to forming a Church without compromising The Truth.

Pneumatic Man is, by dint of his physical nature, drawn into the preoccupations of Carnal Man. But because he shares in higher consciousness he remains aloof from his power-games. He sees the material organism in context, and appreciates how its behaviour is determined by matter and will. He is therefore detached from "this world", and perceives its dictates as stemming from a lower order of reality. For him true consciousness is a burden to bear: there is no sense of moral superiority to motivate; there is no covenant with a personal god to inspire; and there is no divine providence to comfort. Consciousness is an end in itself. Its possessor is a stranger and alien in the world. He bears no message which will enable his hearers to be reconciled to the world.

Gnostics do not entertain any idea of "progress". A Spiritual Principle is journeying through time and matter without its destiny being intertwined with them. In this way, we preempt the disillusion which we are heirs-to. Because those who share The Knowledge did not obtain it by subscribing to a set of beliefs, it must be said that there is no such phenomenon as "gnosticism", to the extent that Truth is not an "ism" at all. Hence, if a person can answer "Yes" to the

question, "Were you with me before the beginning?" then they are "Gnostic" – by nature rather than by belief. Those who are Gnostic are able to perceive in their own human life the cosmic drama of Sophia's repentance and the reciprocal descent of the Gnosis. As Gnostics, our quest is to find and gather all those in the physical body who can affirm this Truth. The Truth is, however, obscured by the demands of The Powers that emanate from Ialdabaoth, namely, Gender, Race, Class, Sexual Preference, Wealth, Family and Territory. Every religious system which has hitherto been known to humankind has been corrupted by these; only The Gnosis in its pure form transcends them. The Gnostic is therefore indifferent to the acquiescence or non-acquiescence of non-Gnostics. Indeed, The Truth may find itself entombed in the pyramid of a religious system, quietly but confidently awaiting resurrection into the light of day.

The moral character of the demiurge is far inferior to that of his supposed creatures. And as for that Creation, with infinite power could we not have done a better job ourselves? Hemmed in as we are on all sides by the iron laws of nature, it is the knowledge of this Truth in the heart of our hearts which will set us free – and the conviction that we belong to something that transcends all of this. Such is our consolation.

GENESIS

The Gnosis issued forth, and stood at once
In rank with Forethought, born to mother true,
Who by her wish had helped to bring him forth.
The One whose sight blinds mortal eye was glad
To see effulgent fruit swell on His bough,
And He anointed him with chrism pressed
From His own goodness, and from His own store
Of overflowing virtue's essence, pure.
And thus endowed, he waited on his source,
And added to the glory that no eye
Can see of his progenitor, and His
Prevenient grace, the matrix of the All.
And Gnosis asked for Truth. The One agreed,
And swift on His consent that Truth came forth,
And joined the heavenly rank of all who dwell
As mind ineffable. But Truth would speak,
And so the Word then issued forth and joined
The sphere in which Truth lives and moves and has
Its being. And from that Word, imbued with Light
And Life, came what could turn a Word to Deed.
By active Word, Sophia came to be.
But she desired a thing exclusive to
Herself. This thought was not inert, and so
It reified: short of perfection, shorn
Of that ideal beauty typical
Of her who gave him birth, a thwarted clone
Of one true-born of heavenly gene and stock,
All self-engendered, selfishly conceived.
The One had not engaged or wed with her
In union divine; no spouse or sire
Had courted her consent, no nuptial bliss
Had blessed the product of chaste amity;
For what she willed was without conference
Of family, or consummation of
Conjugal love; concupiscence instead,
Without relationship, a fantasy impure,
And alien to the hymns its Mother sang
When in accord with her pure ancestry.

In this her wish came true: a monster formed,
A snake with lion-jaws and eyes that blazed
With horrid fire of self-will. She cast
It out, beyond the zone of purity
Where he might not be seen by all her peers:
From Wisdom born, in ignorance to dwell.
She gave her child a name, as it befits
A ruler who inherits a great power:
It is Ialdabaoth, matter's prince.
Ialdabaoth strutted forth, and marched
From place to place, far from the place where he
Was born. And annexing still more he formed
Self-glorifying spheres of fire that still
Flare on unto this day in heaven's dome.
The tyrant raised his hand – his arrogance –
And masturbated, got Authorities,
Egged on by fantasies of unknown realms.
And as Sophia's light within him shone
And gave him unique power: because of this
He blasphemously called himself a god.
So he created seven Angels, each with Powers
Sufficient for a year of days, and all
In mimicry of that intuited
From what was long before. But those whom he
Begot, those children of the ignorance
And dark, lacked intimation of the source
And principle from which all things had come.
A week of angels this way rules the world,
For Ialdabaoth, who is Saklas, has
A multitude of faces, more than all,
So he can show himself in any face,
Just as he wills. He shares his nature with
Them – ev'rything except the pristine power
That he drew from his mother, Wisdom: that
He would not share. This made him cosmic lord,
Conferring – as he thought – divinity
Upon his minion powers. And their "god"
Gave each a place to dwell, a so-called "heaven".
Their urge to rule instilled makes them believe
That they are gods; but Truth is not deceived:

Their bestial natures are revealed to those
Who know. Their god-like attributes are part
And parcel of a fantasy dreamed up
By Saklas; but illusion will not have
Its way – except with those who dwell within
The dream. The light of Truth will chase away
The fog, dissolve its shifting, swirling shapes
Which scare all the deceived like flimsy masks
Pinned onto wind-puffed cloaks. Such images
Invoke some dread reality, from which
They draw their fearful influence and power.
And so it was with these, for Saklas shaped
His schemes upon a kind of memory
Of what he had experienced in the womb
Of what is truly real. And when he saw
The world he had created all laid out,
And gazed upon the panoply which he
Had spun, enveloping his nakedness,
His tongue clapped in his bell, and said:
“I am a jealous god. There is no god
But me.” And so in his stupidity
He gave the game away, and told his friends
There was a God who spurned “Divinity” –
The title of this insane jealousy.
The Mother then became aware of her
Deficiency, and how her light had dimmed.
For when she saw her blemishes within
The light of the Pleroma, she then drew
Across her face a veil of darkness: she
No longer could return her consort's smile
Without deception, and be unabashed.
Her holy fear caused her to hover at
The gate of Truth, unable to go in.
For when her offspring in his arrogance
Had taken power from his Mother, he
Was ignorant of any provenance
And thought her womb was all that there had been.
Infatuated with his handiwork,
He placed himself upon a pedestal,
An idol to himself.

And so she turned;
And so was heard in her humility.
For now she knew what kind of thing he was,
And how he lacked perfection's symmetry.
Up to her source she raised her tear-filled eyes.
He gave the consent, and so a healing flood
Of cleansing holiness washed over her
To make her whole; for Providence agreed
To supervise her in austerity
Within a place of penance set aside
Beyond carnality and snares of sin,
Where she could re-acquire her modesty.
And then a voice came forth: "Behold the Man!"
And when the chieftain of the Powers heard
He had no inkling of from whence it came.
At once, however – ignorant or not –
They were aware – to their damnation – that
There was a holy, perfect Source above:
The Mother-Father, Parents who brought forth
All that there is, and whose beneficence
Was now displayed in dazzling Anthropolos.
A shiver went through Ialdabaoth's world,
And rippled through its fundamental sands.
And in the sky the purest element,
Transfigured by the bright epiphany,
Revealed that Truth is Beauty, Beauty Truth.
And so the carnal gang beheld a light
Infuse the cavern of the world below.
Their eyes were opened, and they saw revealed
The shimmering glory of the Son of Man.
The upstart god addressed his fawning clan:
"Come let us make a thing like what we saw
To give some aim and purpose to our plans."
So each and every one of them then gave
A little something from his psychic pouch,
And made an entity from out themselves,
Each adding layer on layer of plastic stuff,
Along the lines of what they had just seen.
Thus a reflection creaturely became,
And looked just like the sole original –

The perfect Anthropos. And then they said,
"Now let us call him Adam, that his name
May light our high road to imperium."
And so this wondrous work, this body came
About – not yet of flesh, but harbouring
A vital force that tapped the secrets of
Their universe, their sevenfold harmony,
Encapsulated microcosmically
In sense and a potential agency.
And yet there was something in short supply:
The thing had no vocation to fulfil,
And thus no will to try, and lay inert.
No aspiration graced that dawning day.
Sophia wanted to retrieve the power
Which she had given to her bastard son.
In innocence she came and humbly asked
The Mother-Father of transcendent All
Who is most merciful. And He decreed
That Gnosis should go down to that cold place
Where ignorance prevails. Elsewhere, within
The stony hearts of all the Powers the weed
Of envy sprang. Their flaws exposed by this
Wise luminosity, they cast the Man
Into a pit, heaped on him all their dung,
The heavy excrescence of their days.
So Adam came within the mortal sphere,
Coiled there and then of base material,
Engendered from desire within the dark,
Enlivened by a soul-less breath, mere air.
Thus was our fetter forged, our dungeon made,
By which these bandits now enslaved the Man,
Who, in the darkness, soon forgot the light
And grew accustomed to the stench of death.
And then Heimarmene was made, so that in time
The cruellest jailer shackled all his being,
With an array of manacles and chains
Called times and seasons, moments, ages, dates,
Those fetters from which none could be exempt
Outside the All, nor gods nor mortal men,
Now doomed to live within a space of time

That was the past, or will be days to come –
But never now, the present never seized,
With minds obsessed with what will be and what
There might have been with schemes and plans stretched to
Infinity, but that eternal now
Beyond their ken. And hence the consciousness
Of the Beyond eluded Man again.
And furthermore he was engenderised,
By which the husband, stronger than the wife
In limb, for males might claim a spiritual
Domain irrelevant to Truth derived
From high authority – for Saklas knew
He must divide and rule. So in due course
Two sons were born, and Cain and Abel named;
And thanks to Saklas, human creatures were
Endowed with seed to replicate themselves,
The carnal and the psychic; one inspired
By wind, the other by Sophia's ghost.
Meanwhile, within a bower of Life the Man
Called Adam met the Woman Eve, and each
Encount'ring each within their very core
Begot the Son of Man called Seth, the True.
This son and all his offspring, blessed by those
On high, are called to dwell in heaven's courts,
And taught to trace their names inscribed upon
The scroll of Life, while monuments to flesh
Collapse, their epitaphs erased. For those
Who truly live cannot abide the dark:
They must illumine all the catacombs
Where the enlightened have been forced to dwell,
And lead them to the sunlight up above.
Thus shall the righteous gather, and assist
Each other on the way, that true mankind
Might find its rightful place within the All,
And holiness, made whole, might be complete.

THE APHORISMS

1. The world is a place of wounds. Wounds to the spirit bleed venom in the soul. Staunch the flow of venom into a poisoned world.
2. Pay heed to the words of those whom men call "Saviour" and "Enlightened" – provided that they help you towards liberation.
3. Beware The Powers. Their subtlety enables them to invade every corner of the universe, and turn even the most opulent of gifts into an engine of slavery.
4. Beware those who claim detachment, but are in fact disaffected. Spurned lovers of the world, they gladly return to her arms if beckoned.
5. Beware answers. Beware guides. Beware The Powers, whose gifts are snares. Beware leaders of men. Beware schemes and systems. Beware rewards and punishments. Beware the world.
6. Suffer much, say little, understand all.
7. The will to power manifests itself in hierarchies, systems, strange terminologies, and all the paraphernalia which gives the pilgrim cause to stumble. Beware such "gnosis" and its occult science.
8. The way to salvation is through transcendence of the self. This may be through thought or action. Transcend the will to power and thus find freedom.
9. In your heart is a hungry worm that grows until your heart is gone, then feeds upon itself. Trust what your heart tells you, yet deny it. Sharpen your wit, then throw it away. Exercise your mind, then let it be at rest. Welcome the paradox, but do not worship it. Our world was made by Samael. We name the parts with the tongue he gave. His is the Word, but his is not the Truth.

10. Understanding is obscured by the delirium brought on by wealth, power, or worldly beauty. Those who sit in judgment always find for themselves. Seek The Spiritual Man, therefore, among those whom the world condemns. The man who turns his back on the rewards of this world must also bare it to stripes.

11. Bend beneath the blows of The Powers, and so avoid hurt.

12. You sift the dust for tiny nuggets of truth. But you stare at the ground because you walk on all fours. Raise your head above the earth and look to the stars, where you may contemplate the Wisdom already known to you.

13. Forgive! – know the cause of injurious deeds, or your heart will be a worm that feeds upon itself.

14. Do not suppose that spiritual status is in any way related to worldly accomplishments. Behold the crippled idiot who leads men to The Truth! Behold the man of intellect and prowess who uses the gifts of nature to extend his sty!

15. There are those who deny the gods, but few can escape The Powers. Refusing to enter the labyrinth of deception, they bivouac in the vestibule. Rejecting the greater gods of the Temple, they fall prey to the meaner gods of the hearth. Clear the grime from the window and gaze on the world outside.

16. Let the mind of Carnal Man be leavened by the powers-that-be to feed the self. We instead share the simple fare of detachment as we journey together to The Truth.

17. Be compassionate. To understand folly is to forgive.

18. These are not "revelations". These are rather messages from my true self to my true self witnessed by the rest of the world. They are Gnosis made Word, and the waters that are drawn from this well will quench the thirst of many.

19. Sacrifice on the altar of matter is in vain. Yet perhaps Sophia has a place to which her carnal offspring are destined.
20. The Gnostic will not run with the herd or the pack; the wrath of The Archons is therefore inflamed.
21. Those who know say least. But for those who share in the nature of The One there is eternity.
22. The Spirit suffers in flesh the enmity of The Powers. Our souls cry out at injury to the flesh, but these injuries dissolve with the flesh that gave them birth. None are victims of "evil". All are victims of the world.
23. The fool creates patterns of cause and effect – the fat are blessed, the lean are cursed – then traces all to "God". But the fat are not praiseworthy; the lean are not to blame.
24. When Ialdabaoth made the cannibal coil within eternity, it was on the basis of laws neither right nor wrong.
25. Without map, without scrip, without shoes, some arrive before they set out. The land is theirs; they are the kingdom.
26. All things rise from and fall into the dust, with a beauty that cannot be seized.
27. Decay is part and parcel of the material world: ideas decay; beliefs decay. These things do not matter to The Spiritual; neither does it matter if, over aeons of time, The Truth is buried. Indeed, at times The Truth should be prepared for burial.
28. Wisdom can never be seen by all; the quest is in vain.
29. The One can only be perceived by those who share by their very natures in The Transcendent Reality.

30. The Truth is not to be discovered through any personal relationship – for the root of all bonding of separates is carnal. Only pure Knowledge saves: the Knowledge that knows itself by itself, uncontaminated by affection.

31. There is no appeal to reason here; there is only an appeal to Knowledge. Those who know will recognise what they know: argument is unnecessary.

32. The issue is freedom. "Show us the one who brings freedom", you demand. I can not. Only The One knows The One. The One trapped in flesh seeks liberation, and finds a path. The slave dreams of becoming the master. Yet the master is also a slave. The true goal is to transcend the will to power and so find freedom.

33. For The Spiritual Man "salvation" is not an issue. The spark can never be lost, though the whole world fall back into confusion. The issue is liberation. The means of liberation is Knowledge.

34. Can the unborn child picture its birth? Can The Spiritual imagine the freedom which will be theirs?

35. No "God" will release his slaves. His chains are subtle. They are forged with fear. And the anger of his priests is unbounded against those who will not accept his manacles. For the priest is a slave who dreams himself master; awake from all dreams and you will be free.

36. Through Knowledge, The Spiritual Man will avoid that which makes thicken the prison walls. And he will turn his gaze to the window, and the stars beyond, and see what his captors, to their perpetual rage, will never see.

37. Spurning the vows of the devotee, they make their pledge to wealth, family and status. They hear the roar of the beast and serve it. We are called to slay it, and to press on to the gate that leads to Life.

38. Ialdabaoth has a multitude of colours, and can present foliage according to his desire. And yet he is a stump. His branches decay, his fruit is rotten.

39. Can all men be saved? – The Carnal and The Psychic will always worship The Archons. (The Spiritual Man may also be seduced along this path). These powers, including the demiurge, are but the vices of such men elevated to a principle.

40. You entertain a doubt that the alleged powers and the supposed path of liberation exist only in the mind. How can this be so? If the mind of man is a product of nature, is it not impressed with the shape of things from outside itself? Admire The Powers, and spurn them. Never underestimate them: their vigour is real.

41. The Carnal, ever limited by their nature, see only idols that may gratify their manifold needs.

42. The lips of the messenger are frozen in stone.

43. The bellies of The Carnal need leavened bread.

44. Those most committed to the illusion, and who fail to grasp the true nature of things, succeed in the eyes of the world.

45. That which overturns matter is seen as a destroyer by those in thrall to The Powers.

46. Though there is more than one path, there is only one goal: transcendence of "self".

47. The Spiritual meets enlightenment as logos, The Psychic as mythos.

48. To leave the womb is to escape a grave. To abandon security is to leave death behind.

49. The slave dreams of becoming the master. Yet the true goal is to transcend the will to power and so find freedom.

50. The Gnostic "revelation" is provisional – a celebration of the riches of The Truth in currency whose value fluctuates, and much of which is base metal. No-one has a monopoly when it comes to the manner in which the truth is expressed.

51. The three human kinds exist because of the way that the universe has come about, and not by election.

52. Gems of Truth may be lodged in poor settings.

53. Your "good" is self-serving, your "morality" an instrument of prey.

54. The Carnal is the world. The Psychic perceives a world. The Spiritual knows a prison.

55. Being order in matter, Ialdabaoth's is the Word.

56. Notions of "good" are corrupted by consideration of the provisional, the transitory, the self-serving. Yet there is a kind of "good". That which tends towards The One is "good" because it tends to what is real.

57. The virtue of The Spiritual Man is detachment, and this leaves no mark for the eyes of the world to behold. The Spiritual Man does not pursue wealth, so all the world sees is poverty. The Spiritual Man does not pursue power, so all the world sees is weakness. The Spiritual Man does not seek fullness, so the world despises an empty thing.

58. The Spirit is trapped in this world, and the flesh demands belonging. And so The Spiritual Man chooses his place of belonging on the grounds of compassion.

59. There are three paths to the One: the path of action, the path of devotion, and the path of Knowledge, but the surest

of these is the path of Knowledge. Yet none is strong against idolatry.

60. Our detractors accuse us of negativity, of pessimism, of denial. So be it. It is they who refuse to confront the dissatisfaction that eats at their hearts like a hungry worm.

61. The benighted may not see The Light, because their eyes have closed in the darkness. And yet to those whose eyes are pierced by The Light he gives power to become sons of light: the flame already in them grows stronger.

62. Where, then, is healing to be found? The Pneuma is present in the world – not only in some men, but in the order of events. But to the world, its order is disorder.

63. To side with the Demiurge is to side with order. A tyrant is benevolent as long as we enjoy his favour. But the supporter of a tyrant should always be ready to see himself put to death for the sake of order.

64. The Spiritual are not hedged by race or by class, by gender or by age; Wisdom does not spring from brain or tongue.

65. The material world is real enough, but that reality is hierarchical. That is, matter is not evil – simply inferior.

66. The Truth, like the royal state, does not reside in the flesh of one person. "The king is dead. Long live the king!"

67. The criminal and victim are one. The judge must select by caprice, then assert a justice beyond reproach. But the fat are not worthy of praise nor the lean of blame. The righteous men slain by the oppressor even as he offers sacrifice, or the pilgrim crushed by the falling tower at the holy place – they do not receive their just desert.

68. The world is a place of deception. This deception is promoted by the angels of Ialdabaoth and their servants,

and is expressed in superstitious practices: idols and altars and temples and sacrifices and libations to The Powers. Religious language itself may be a stumbling-block in the path of Truth: thus one who hears the word "God" does not perceive what is correct, but perceives deception. It is necessary to turn away from deception in order to be free of The Powers; The Spiritual are able to overcome deception with Truth. What do you perceive the emptiness with? Perhaps you apprehend it with The Truth within – if there is Truth within. If, on the other hand, there is no Truth within, then you only see and feel what your flesh and its psychic servant likes or loathes.

69. That which overturns matter is seen as a destroyer by those in thrall to The Powers.

70. The Carnal, ever limited by their nature, see only idols that may gratify their manifold needs.

71. The true centre of our being resides elsewhere. This is both our peace and our restlessness, our stillness and our urge.

72. The spark can never be lost, though the whole world fall back into confusion.

73. The impulse to order is genuinely divine; the impulse to worship order is not.

74. The Powers do not change men for the better. They simply confirm them in their corruption. Those who worship The Powers worship their own carnal natures and are controlled entirely by instinct.

75. The tyrant is himself a prisoner.

76. The One knows The One. What need has The One to pray? Our wills attend on The One; what need have we to pray? What need have those whose wills attend on The One to ask for anything?

77. Despair of the world brings hope.
78. Will is the fundamental principle of all independent life.
79. The Psychic may choose The Light, and because this choice transcended nature, something may be reborn.
80. Enlightenment is the gift of the few to the many.
81. Though there is more than one path, there is only one goal: transcendence of "self".
82. Nothing can come between The Spiritual and eventual bliss.
83. To the tribes The Spiritual are of no account; to the leaders they are invisible.
84. Zeal in reform is commendable; holy war is good. But this is not our way, for we are the ultimate subversive.
85. Some ages may sink into a depravity which guarantees their eventual extinction in the way of all flesh.
86. It is those most committed to the illusion who succeed in the eyes of the world. It is those who succeed in the eyes of the world who fail to grasp the true nature of things.
87. There is one system, one illusion. It has a demonic beauty, and torments us.
88. God is not supreme. Miracles do not happen. This is because matter came into being before God, and God himself cannot change the iron laws of the material universe. Because he does not possess the ultimate spiritual supremacy, he is unable to "save" us.
89. A mediator may take a costly gift to appease a tyrant and win favours from him. To suppose that God is such a ruler

is a notion unworthy of God or of His true worshippers, and will attract only those intent on suing the Deity for favours.

90. There are always those who seek a profession as mediators. Entry to the Kingdom by those who are its citizens needs no such mediation and therefore no priesthood.

91. Ialdabaoth is not the ultimate authority. But being order in matter, his is the Word.

92. None are victims of something called "evil". All are victims of the way the world is – the inexorable laws of nature.

93. True consciousness is a cross to bear: there is no sense of moral superiority to motivate; there is no covenant with a personal god to inspire; and there is no divine providence to comfort. Consciousness is an end in itself.

94. In the flesh the gap between saint and sinner is imperceptible. "God" must base his selection on caprice, then assert a justice beyond argument and reproach. Such is the way of the tyrant Ialdabaoth, himself the prisoner of iron laws.

95. The Spiritual can not be identified by any physical, mental or moral characteristics. And because the world is irredeemable, there is no point in forming an organisation which promotes faith. There can be no scripture, no sacrifice, and no priesthood.

96. Anything experienced is, by its nature, less than true reality. The enlightened possess true perspective as part of their nature – it cannot be acquired by effort.

97. If the existence of neither revealer nor revealed can be recognised as authorities higher than the allegedly "supreme" Ialdabaoth, then both, dimly perceived, have to

be imported into the deity. But their subjection makes idols of them.

98. There are those who say, "We have the keys to salvation. Salvation is easy. Simply do as we say!" There are those who say, "You enjoy a worldly prosperity. That in itself is a sign of grace. Come and join our ranks, and add to that the assurance of salvation!" There are those who say, "Salvation is an amusing game that adds spice to our comfortable lives. Come and join us: realise your full potential!" How subtle and persuasive are The Powers! – not the dumb idols we habitually suppose them to be!

99. Those who are supposed to be guardians of spiritual matters – the scribes, the teachers, the priests – are no less open to corruption than the infidels. Only the gift of suffering strips such corruption away and raises head and voice above the edge of the prison wall.

100. The comfort of rites is a comfort of sleep, where materiality is dreamed as order and justice.

101. People may use a mediator in their dealings with God, but to do so presupposes that there are two classes of human beings, one of which is closer to God.

102. If you pray to God, then it is Ialdabaoth; if he comes to your aid then it is Saklas.

103. Knowledge is not the gift of a just god. It is that which offers refuge from an unjust demiurge, who disposes of his illusory riches capriciously, and leads the recipients to ignorance and eternal night.

104. Knowledge is not a gift. It is the right and the burden of those imprisoned yet already free.

105. We say "Not this" and "Not that", and dissatisfaction eats at your heart like a hungry worm.

106. The One is unnamed and ineffable, the source of all being.

107. The One is pure and does not strive, since The One lacks nothing. The One is unnamed, and yearns for no thing.

108. The Carnal and The Psychic will always worship The Powers, for they are their vices raised to a principle. The Carnal Man who sacrifices his own self for his family or friends does a noble thing, even if he is acting under instinct. This instinct is indeed a higher impulse than the drive to self-preservation. There is some sense in which nature is refined by it. It creates a window in matter for the Fullness to be revealed.

109. The Eternal Being's Fullness is by nature apart from matter, but has become widely scattered and briefly detained in the world because of an accident.

110. Purity was divided; thus "he" became "they".

111. The One in us perceives beyond mortal ken; this is "Gnosis".

112. From The One came the All. Only The One knows the One. And those who seek proof of the One need only to acknowledge their yearning.

113. The utterances of The Spiritual are the Word of The One.

114. Transcendence of this world is not an experience open to all. Wisdom derives from a perspective rather than an experience. Hence the quest for induced enlightenment is fruitless.

115. For true Gnostics there is no providence. The Spiritual are trapped and are returning through the aeons by paths of liberation which are difficult, and known only by themselves. Yet liberation is assured.

116. May The One reach out to the knowledge within you and draw you to the ultimate goal.

117. The True Reality is beyond us. This One can not be perceived by anything other than The One. The One can only ever be described in terms of The One.

118. The material world is real enough, but that reality is hierarchical. That is, matter is not evil - simply inferior. This perspective on the material world is related to an insight into the way things have come to be as they are.

119. Myth must negate itself in the telling if idols are not to be engendered.

120. There are no sacraments. "Salvation" is in Knowledge, a Knowledge that cannot be conferred.

121. In the first phase survival is all. Ruled by The Powers, whom we name as gods, we seek to bend them to our will by bribes and flattery, by submission or intimidation. Then we create patterns of cause and effect. Gratification is reward, denial is punishment: the fat are blessed, the lean are cursed. And we trace all causes to one cause, whom we call "God". Soon we see that the fat are not praiseworthy nor the lean worthy of blame. So our patterns become more tenuous: our ancestors were righteous or sinners, or we ourselves in a previous life. But this rightly offends a sense of justice, and so we find a second source for evil, or suppose that God's ways are inscrutable to men. And so we wait in vain for the overcoming of the one, or the revelation of the other.

122. Nomos is not a cosmic force: human behaviour is affected by but cannot affect the laws of nature.

123. Suffering is not caused by transgression, and death cannot be overcome by obedience to law.

124. It is not possible for anyone to state the destiny of humankind beyond death. But because God is eternal, that destiny too is eternal, for true mankind is in the mind of God. Those who seek the truth about their destiny in order to fulfil it join their wills with the will of God and may therefore participate in the eternity of the divine nature.

125. The principle which guides us has no beginning and no end. We are heirs to Eternal Truth and Life, and we are trustees of The Way.

126. If The Powers exist in the mind, were they not put there by The Powers? The path that leads beyond is a liberation.

127. The universe and events within it are without meaning. There is no good news to proclaim. An account of primeval events merely enables whoever has ears to hear it to derive some comfort from understanding their true predicament in this material universe.

128. None are victims of something called "evil". Do not seek to exonerate God by blaming man. When Jehovah manufactured this cannibal coil within eternity, he made it on the basis of laws which had nothing to do with right or wrong. All are victims of the way the world is – the inexorable laws of nature.

129. It would be nonsense to say that The Carnal Man is "saved" by sacrifice. He has no "self" to save.

130. Some ages may strive towards understanding in the manner of The Animate Man. Such cultures may become transfused with enlightenment, but such enlightenment is the gift of the few to the many.

131. The enemy is "in here" as well as "out there". Mark well how The Powers are at work in our hearts. Admire them while spurning them. Never underestimate them: their strength is armed with cunning.

132. The most primitive religion seeks the renewal of nature by fertility. The more advanced religion seeks the renewal of society by justice. The highest religion seeks the transcendence of matter by Spirit.

133. If we cling to these notions of "good" and "justice" we merely increase the suffering of the self. Leave good and evil behind with the self, and go to where no thing exists, and yet All is.

134. There is a question which you dare not ask because you know it is foolish. Let it be framed for you: "Where is God to be found?" It has been answered many a time by the sages, but heard only by fools. God is within ourselves.

135. The task is not to establish systems. The task is to call forth those who share The Gnosis, to summon the invisible community of Knowledge and insight – an invitation to all The Spiritual to celebrate here the Consciousness which we always have shared, and always will, that we may enjoy it together at our Source in greater measure to all eternity.

136. Struggle from the chrysalis of this world and take wing to regions which are intimated only by yearning. Those who seek proof of The One need only to acknowledge this yearning. Their despair is the harbinger of hope.

137. Marriage to the world is prostitution, in which the whore demands not only a fee, but a retainer for her services, and the husband is client to his own pimp.

138. Notions of "good" are corrupted by consideration of the provisional, the transitory, the self-serving. These weave the sticky thread of the illusory reality of this world. Morality may be an instrument of prey against the freedom of the self.

139. That which overturns the iron necessity of matter is seen as a destroyer by those in thrall to The Powers. Men of

Knowledge, however, are able to read such events as signs which are effective to the healing of the spirit.

140. The land is ours; we are the kingdom. What need have we of a king?

142. If we cling to notions of "good" and "justice" we merely increase the suffering of the self. Leave good and evil behind with the self, and go to where no thing exists, and yet All is.

143. Discourse with one's fellow spiritual beings brings the purest pleasure this world can offer: it is memories of youth and dreams of happy old age. For The Spiritual Man knows that one day, no matter how long the term of the sentence, and how protracted the torments inflicted by those who for a day lord it over him, he will return to his home in The One, to be lost – and found – forever in the bliss of union.

144. Three things are necessary to start out on the path to enlightenment: first, a culture; second, a religion; third, suffering. One is the soil, one the sunshine, the other the rain. But the seed comes only from The One.

145. We perceive, we analyse, we interpret, we mould, we subjugate reality to ourselves. And we say that the root of our systems is "God" – a god made in our own image. When we worship this image, we worship ourselves.

146. Where, then, is Truth to be found? I can only tell you – since I can only use words out of falsehood – where Truth is not to be found.

147. The Eternal Being's Fullness is by nature apart from matter, but has become widely scattered and briefly detained in the world because of an accident. Those who share The Transcendent show their true natures by detachment from carnality and a compassion for those who suffer false hope about the possibilities of this world.

148. The Spirit suffers in flesh the enmity of The Powers.

149. Our souls cry out at injury to the flesh, but these injuries dissolve with the flesh that gave them birth. None are victims of "evil". All are victims of the world.

150. We hear the cries. Ialdabaoth is powerless to overcome the iron laws which lead to suffering and death.

151. The Enlightened are so by nature.

152. The message is an expression of The Spiritual Man's sublimity. Worship of the messenger shows The Psychic Man's mendacity aided and abetted by The Carnal Man's stupidity.

153. Transcendence of this world is not an experience open to all. Wisdom or "Enlightenment" derives from a perspective rather than an experience. Hence the quest for Enlightenment as an experience induced by meditation is fruitless.

154. Though there is more than one path to the goal, the ultimate aim and end of all true Life is to transcend that illusion which we call the "self". The Way is not to give up one's own "self" in order simply to be absorbed into another "self". Religion offers many such illusory paths.

155. The benighted may not see The Light, because their eyes have closed in the darkness.

156. Misfortune may be a purgative for the purification of spirit, but pain refines the gold: it does not place it in the heart.

157. Only those who know are saved – not from pain, but from the deeper torment and waste of self-delusion.

158. The three kinds of men – Carnal, Animate and Spiritual – exist because of the way that the universe has come about, and not as a result of some capricious act of election on the part of a demiurge.

159. If there is good news to be brought to the world concerning its redemption, its messenger must speak the same language as the world and be at home with its ways. The Gnostic, however, is a stranger and alien in the world. He can in no way proclaim a message which will enable his hearers to be reconciled to the world.

160. There is comfort, nevertheless, for The Spiritual – and only The Spiritual – in knowing (or rather, recognising, since he already knows) the cause of his exile, and the character of his home. Reclining in the walled garden of the gathered, the teacher brings the purest pleasure of this world: shared memories of youth and dreams of labours past. The sage brings news of home.

161. Man is mortal, but The Gnosis can never die; man is weak, but The Gnosis has mastery of all that endures.

162. The Gnosis is not hedged by race or by class, by intelligence, language, gender or age.

163. The Carnal Man is part of the material world. The Animate Man perceives that he is part of this world and seeks either to alter or retain his position within it. To The Spiritual Man, however, the natural world is a prison. But the spark can never be lost, though the whole world fall back into confusion.

164. Carnal Man is ignorant of The Supreme Being and will return entirely to matter. Meanwhile, ever limited by his nature, he clings to idols that may gratify his manifold needs. For in him matter is dominant. This dominance manifests itself in a preoccupation with the consumption necessary to maintain material integrity. His desire to bring

order into matter is simply an expression of a desire to dominate it.

165. The Psychic may remove his self from the centre of things, and by so doing turn his back on the world.

166. Spiritual Man has the capacity to know fully The Supreme Being, and his ultimate destiny is to enter into complete union with that Supreme Being; for Spiritual Man uniquely within the material universe shares the nature of The Supreme Being.

167. The prime virtue of The Spiritual Man is detachment, and this leaves no mark for the eyes of the world to behold.

168. The difference between The Spiritual and the non-spiritual is not simply one of belief: the non-spiritual is actually incapable of grasping what The Spiritual is talking about.

169. The insights of The Spiritual may be manifest as deeds, utterances or decrees. They may be enshrined in histories, codes or rituals. Their form may be poetic, philosophical or legislative. But beyond all these is the Word of enlightenment which comes from The One.

170. The Carnal seek investment, not beauty.

171. The Carnal Man is subject to Ialdabaoth's laws. The Spiritual Man has to overcome the world. But The Psychic Man strives actively to promote the principles on which the world was founded, and thereby compounds its suffering.

172. The Animate Man who re-orders his universe may become a means for the Light to shine in the darkness. And because this choice transcended nature, something of him may be saved for re-birth further along the path to The One.

173. The Spiritual Man meets Enlightenment as Truth and is helped towards liberation.

174. Those who sit in judgment always find for themselves. Seek The Spiritual Man, therefore, among those whom the world condemns.

175. For The Spiritual Man salvation is not an issue. The spark can never be lost, though the whole world fall back into confusion. The issue is liberation. The means of liberation is Knowledge.

176. The Animate Man meets Enlightenment as mythos. This myth may enable him to shape his life into the pattern of Truth, thus making way for the Logos.

177. Those who are heirs to The Truth are not recipients of some inscrutable "grace": they participate in Truth by nature. The question then is not the root of the creator's caprice, but how the heirs of Truth became trapped in matter.

178. The gifts given by The Spiritual Man are in themselves their own proof of value to the discriminating, the recipient possessed of inbred taste. The Carnal are like the vulgar who need advice on how to furnish their house.

179. It may be that in some way which is beyond our comprehension the sacrifice made by The Carnal Man creates a door in matter for the emissary of The Fullness to enter. But those who are non-knowers will get no further than the outer portals; and those who Know are already within the inner sanctum.

180. The insights of The Spiritual may be focused into gems which attract the light, although these jewels may be lodged in poor settings.

EPILOGUE

I leave these frail and perishable leaves;
To rot just where they fall. The seed I've sown
And you take to the mould, perhaps may rise;
Although what fruit to bear I cannot say.
And as for me, who made this papyrus
To lay my aching head on bed of reeds,

Will I – in crumbling cradle quietly
Asleep, my pains all parked and epitaphed
Outside that trench dug deep to shield my shell
Against all shocks – will I unready then
Grow tongue and shape a curse on that grim Day
When an archangel's voice might bellow down

Into my inert den? Will I be born
Again, the life-force thawing my cold blood,
Its swell conveying me to God knows where?
For, "He who dies acquitted is of sin",
The apostle says; but at this threatened doom,
My breath must state my case, accountable.

That case is this: I hope my wanton flesh
Will not degrade the hopes I here expressed
I hope my leaves heal you before they die,
As though from Tree of Life, and in our dust
Which harbours many seeds, I hope what is
Sown here will one day sprout to bear bright fruits

As beautiful as gems; and if the "will"
Of what will be's replaced by "should", then let
Unmade, thus made again, be all made good.
If here you find the truth of what we are
Well-charactered, then of your charity
As well as for yourself, please pray for me.

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